



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/782,855	02/14/2001	Dann LeRoy Parker JR.	20526Y	9302

210 7590 06/13/2003

MERCK AND CO INC
P O BOX 2000
RAHWAY, NJ 070650907

EXAMINER

COVINGTON, RAYMOND K

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

1625

DATE MAILED: 06/13/2003 //

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/782,855

Applicant(s)

PARKER ET AL.

Examiner

Raymond Covington

Art Unit

1625

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 19 February 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-31 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-31 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____ 6) ☐ Other: _____

The specification does not give any guidance as to how each of the heterocyclic substituted derivatives was prepared. In In re Wands, 8 USPQ2d 1400 (1988), factors to be considered in determining whether a disclosure meets the enablement requirement of 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, have been described. They are:

1. the nature of the invention,
2. the state of the prior art,
3. the predictability or lack thereof in the art,
4. the amount of direction or guidance present,
5. the presence or absence of working examples,
6. the breadth of the claims,
7. the quantity of experimentation needed, and
8. the level of the skill in the art.

In the instant case, Applicants are claiming a method of preventing, hot flashes, anxiety or depression. There is no absolute predictability even in view of the seemingly high level of skill in the art. The existence of these obstacles establishes that the contemporary knowledge in the art would prevent one of ordinary skill in the art from accepting any therapeutic regimen on its face. The instant specification does not give any guidance as to how the instant claimed process effects the full range modalities and mechanisms necessary to completely prevent the conditions claimed. I.e. more than one thing causes, for example, depression. In order to practice the claimed invention, one skilled in the art would have to speculate which conditions could be prevented using the claimed compounds found in the instant claims. The number of possible conditions

Art Unit: 1625

embraced by the claims would impose undue experimentation on the skilled art worker. Therefore, the broad terminology treatment or prevention is not enabled because the metes and bounds of conditions that could be treated or prevented cannot be ascertained.

Claims 19-21 is again rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112 (first paragraph) on the grounds of an insufficient disclosure of utility. The rejection is maintained for reason of record. Applicants' comments have been noted and considered but are not persuasive of patentability. While it is conceded that the claimed invention may have applicability for treatment of hot flashes, anxiety and depression, there is insufficient disclosure to support prevention of depression per se. Disclosure to support the full range modalities and mechanisms necessary to completely prevent depression is not given.

The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

Claims 1-31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, because the specification, while being enabling for non-heterocyclin substituted 1, 2, 9, 9+ tetrahydro-3H-fluoren-3-ene compounds, does not reasonably provide enablement for compounds containing heterocycloalkyl, heteroaryl, heteroarylalkyl etc. The specification does not enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make or use the invention commensurate in scope with these claims. There is insufficient disclosure of starting materials to place such a diverse genus of compounds in possession of the public in the event of a patent

Art Unit: 1625

grant. In re Focci 169 USPQ (1971). In addition, the unlimited scope of compounds encompassed by the above terms would require more than routine experimentation as per e.g. ~~A~~ Ambruster 185 USPQ 152 (1975), and In re Angstadt & Griffen 1990 USPQ 704 (CCPA 1970) wherein routine experimentation, was defined by the late judge Rich as 8 hours or one working day. In the present use more than one day would be necessary.

No claim is allowed.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Raymond Covington whose telephone number is (703) 308-4704. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Alan Rotman can be reached on (703) 308-2439. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 308-4556 for regular communications and (703) 308-4556 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-1235.

Alan L. Rotman

ALAN L. ROTMAN
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 1600

R
Covington/LR
May 21, 2003